

# NOTES

## Advice To Young Poets

### On Becoming

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*Here are some basic thoughts on  
that literary genre we call Poetry.  
Consider them if you will if your  
needs dictate such thinking.  
The fundamental consideration  
here is to know the rules  
before you break them.*

- Avoid becoming a celebrity through words, but nourish the celebrity of words.
- Recognize that poetry is an art form. That implies discipline, and the willingness to eradicate any attitudes that might interfere with your calling.
- Be willing to seek and consider advice from seasoned, experienced poets.
- Respect the language.
- As a disciplined artist know that poems may make demands upon you that will challenge your creativity.
- Since words are the only material from what you create, respect the word, especially through its housekeeping, ie, correct spelling, usage, etc.
- Use dialect only if the poem requires it. Never use dialect out of context to impress the Reader.
- Poems require more than one writing. Respect that. Make changes wherever the poem dictates. Watch the poem change and don't be threatened by that. Follow the poem in as many writings as necessary, and let the final poem surprise you. Remember a good poem must be nourished.
- Avoid didactic poems at all cost. (Don't preach to the Reader.) If this is your leaning, write an essay. If you wish to make a serious point, however show, don't tell.
- Use poetic structures such as metaphors, similes, idea, and punctuation.
- Sound and Sense must work together. Therefore, never sacrifice the sense of a poem in order to use rhyme schemes.
- Don't be too anxious to get published. Once you show evidence that you are a committed artist, publication of your work will no longer be an issue, even if such publication is spasmodic.
- When you feel ready as a committed artist, write your book, but know that poetry has empowered you. You have not empowered poetry.
- Don't let literary movements define your work. Consider your talent unique. Let your vision guide you. The Spirit lives there.
- Trust your vision. If you're good at what you do, it will outlive you.

*Some of these suggestions have appeared in  
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